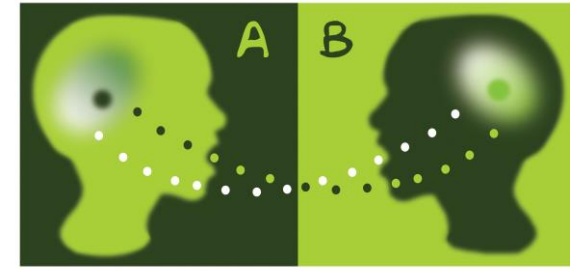




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Temporal information marks person in a Northern Lazio Italian variety

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Background

- In central non-standard Italian (CiT), the perfect conveys past meaning.
- The auxiliaries are *essere* ('to be') and *avere* ('to have').
- 3rd person *avere* is *ha* /a/; 2nd person *avere* is *hai* /ai/.
- The consonantal onset of the participle is purportedly geminated in 3rd person, but not in 2nd person.  

Raddoppiamento Sintattico

- An external sandhi phenomenon (i.e., cross word boundary modification) subject to prosodic constraints.
 - Phonological: triggered by preceding stressed vowel.
 - Lexical: triggered by specific lexical items
- CiT has both types of RS.
- *ha* /a/ environment is very nearly analogous to the prepositional phrase environment that triggers RS (e.g., *a casa* [ak:asa]).
- So, another instance of lexically-determined RS, albeit an unusual one?

The Twist

- In running speech, *avere* is often reduced in 2nd person from <hai> to [a], rendering it homophonous with 3rd person <ha> /a/.



- Full independent pronouns are usually dropped in casual speech, thus doubling conveys person marking (i.e., it has specific meaning).
- Specific meaning results in lexicalization (e.g., *a bórdo* 'on board' → *abbórdo* 'I accost').

Study Questions

1. Is this a prosodic pattern?
2. If not, how do we want to think about the form representations? Lexical entries or more abstract?

Working hypothesis: Doubling helps mark a contrast between 2nd and 3rd person in CiT and so is stored in the lexicon as part of the perfect construction.

Predictions

1. Is this a prosodic pattern?
 - No. Not subject to blocking.
2. If not, how do we want to think about the form representations? Lexical entries or more abstract?
 - More abstract: (a) no effect of verb frequency; (b) not the same as the phonemic pattern.

Participants

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Speech Materials


Avere Verbs (Participles)

initial C	low frequency	high frequency
/f/	falsato 'falsified' ferito 'wounded' filato 'spun'	fatto 'done' fermato 'stopped' finite 'finished'
/s/	salato 'salted' segato 'sawn' solcato 'dug (a groove)'	saputo 'known' sentito 'heard, felt' sognato 'dreamed'
/m/	macchiato 'stained' menato 'beaten' mondato 'cleansed'	mangiato 'eaten' messo 'put' mostrato 'shown'
/n/	nappato 'poured (a sauce)' negletto 'neglected' normato 'regularized'	nascosto 'hidden' negate 'denied' notato 'noticed'

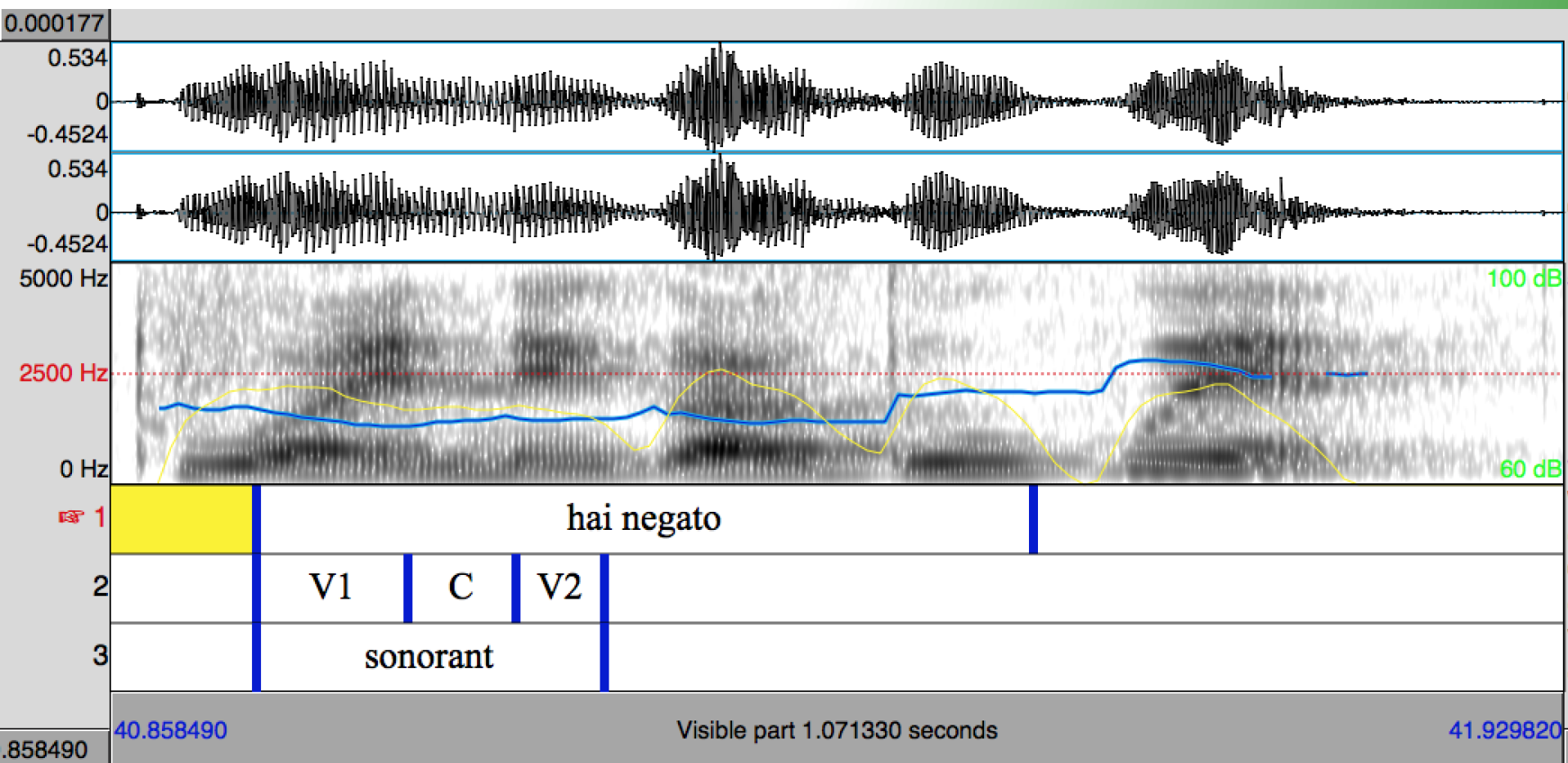
Speech Materials

medial C	singleton	geminate
/f/	Afete 'Greek town' grafi 'graphs' rifare 'do again'	affette 'affected.FEM.PL' graffi 'scratches' riffare 'raffle'
/s/	case 'houses' casone 'big house' rosa 'pink.FEM.SG'	casse 'boxes' cassone 'big box' rossa 'red.FEM.SG'
/m/	andiamo 'we go' coma 'coma' some 'burden'	andammo 'we went' comma 'provision, subsection' somme 'sums, amounts'
/n/	nona 'ninth.FEM.SG' pane 'bread' sano 'healthy.MASC.SG'	nonna 'grandmother' panne 'breakdown' sanno 'they know'

Elicitation & Design

- Frame sentence
 - pronoun included
 - (usually) phrase medial target
- Target items (verbs)
 - 2nd vs. 3rd person
 - high vs. low frequency
 - comparator items (singleton vs. geminate)
- Broad and narrow focus 

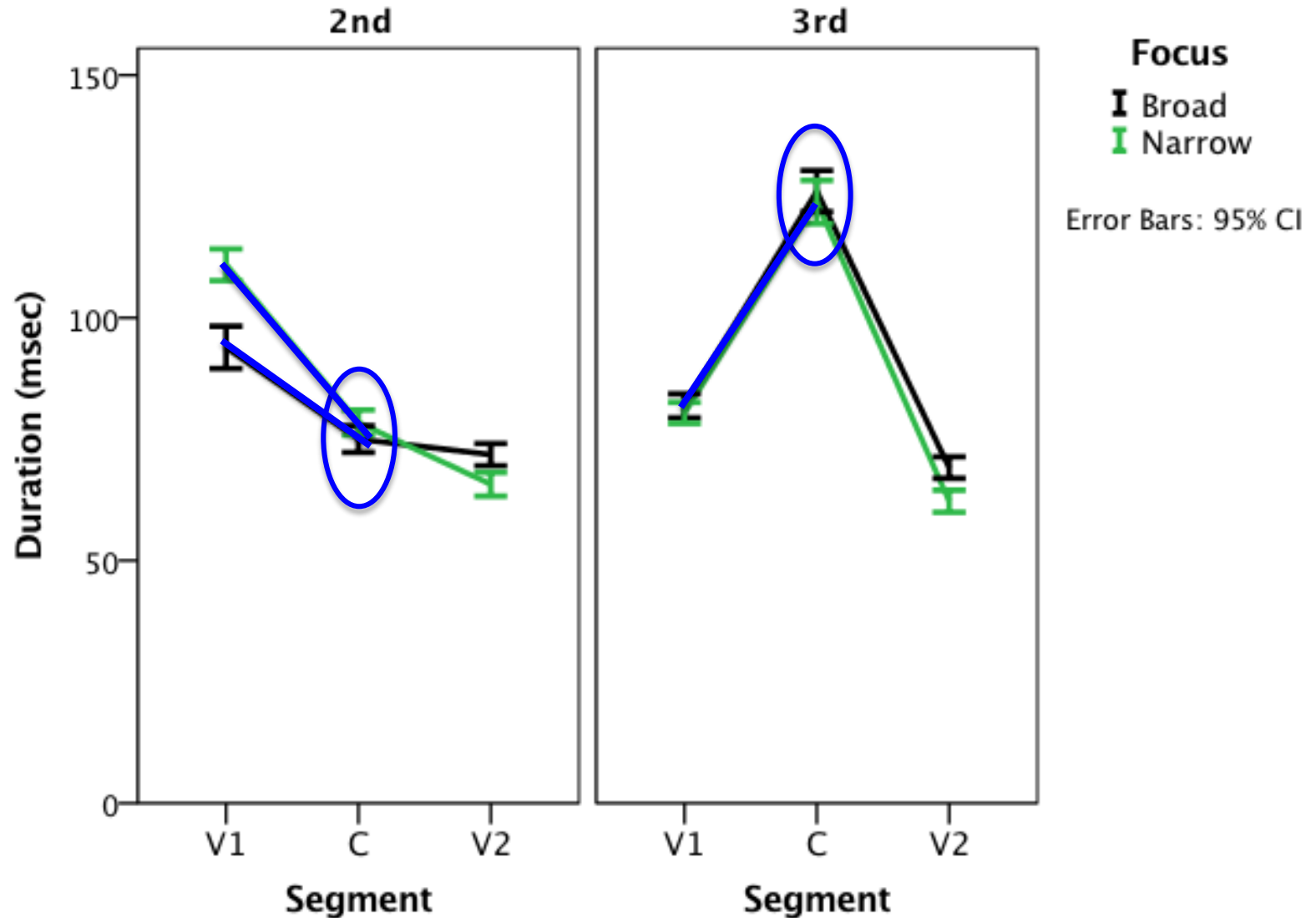
Dependent Variables



Verb Phrase Results

- Absolute C duration
 - Effects of PERSON and CONSONANT.
 - NO effect of focus or verb frequency.
 - NO interactions.
- Relative C duration
 - Effects of PERSON, FOCUS, CONSONANT.
 - Interaction between PERSON and FOCUS as well as PERSON and CONSONANT.
 - NO effect of verb frequency.

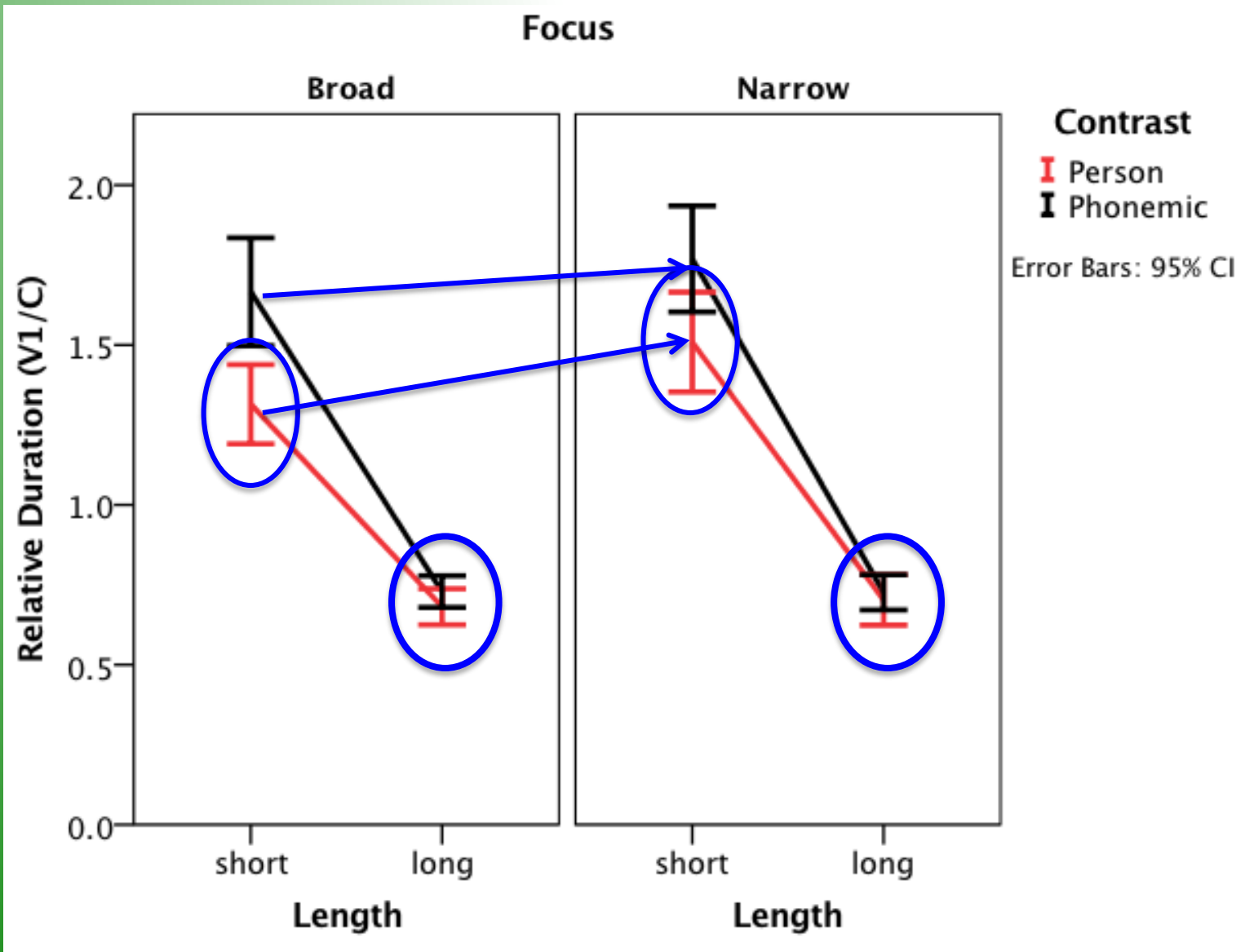
Person Marking



Comparison w/ Phonemic Contrast

- Absolute C duration
 - Effects of CONTRAST and LENGTH.
 - Interactions between CONTRAST and LENGTH and between LENGTH and CONSONANT.
 - NO effect of focus.
- Relative C duration
 - Effects of CONTRAST, LENGTH, FOCUS, and CONSONANT and interactions between these factors.

Comparison w/ Phonemic Length



Discussion

1. Not subject to blocking. ✓

* Caveat 

2. Regarding representation:

a. no effect of verb frequency ✓

* Caveat

b. not the same as the phonemic pattern ✗

Conclusion

Data like these are tantalizing for what they might suggest about the representation of temporal information.

- Whereas temporal information that is prosodic can be thought of as modulatory; this pattern is different.
- How should we think of “constructions” (if at all) with respect to form representation?
- How might we incorporate a construction grammar approach to morpho-syntax into a theory of speech-language production?



THANK YOU